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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/675,797	09/29/2003	Gouichi Nishizawa	81864.0026	2234

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EXAMINER

SHEEHAN, JOHN P

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1742

DATE MAILED: 03/09/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/675,797

Applicant(s)

NISHIZAWA ET AL.

Examiner

John P. Sheehan

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 5/04, 4/05, 5/05.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The information disclosure statement filed April 4, 2005 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2), which requires a legible copy of each cited foreign patent document; each non-patent literature publication or that portion which caused it to be listed; and all other information or that portion which caused it to be listed. Applicants have not provided a complete copy of each of the three listed foreign patent documents, but rather have provided only abstracts of each of the these documents. The submission of only the abstracts of the underlying foreign language documents is not sufficient for the record to reflect the submission of the entire document. The three abstracts that were submitted have been placed in the application file, but the information referred to therein has not been considered. The six listed US Patents have been considered.
3. The information disclosure statement filed May 3, 2004 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2), which requires a legible copy of each cited foreign patent document; each non-patent literature publication or that portion which caused it to be listed; and all other information or that portion which caused it to be listed. Applicants have not

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provided a complete copy of each of the three listed foreign patent documents, but rather have provided only abstracts of each of these documents. The submission of only the abstracts of the underlying foreign language documents is not sufficient for the record to reflect the submission of the entire document. The three abstracts that were submitted have been placed in the application file, but the information referred to therein has not been considered.

Claim Interpretation

4. Applicants are advised that in claim 1, line 7, the phrase, "4% or less by weight (excluding O) of Co", has been interpreted by the Examiner to mean that the cobalt content is greater than zero but does not exceed 4%.
5. There is no language in the applicants' claims to preclude the presence of Zr from the high R alloy recited in the claimed process. Accordingly, the instant claims are considered to encompass (1) the embodiment wherein both the high and low R alloys contain Zr and (2) the embodiment wherein only the low R alloy contains Zr.
6. Additionally, in view of the fact that there is no language in the claims that precludes the R rich alloy from containing boron and the use of the open terminology "containing" (claim 1, line 12) used to describe the R rich alloy, the claims are considered to encompass the embodiment wherein the R rich phase contains boron.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

8. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamamoto et al. (Yamamoto, US Patent Application Publication 2002/0007875 A1).

Yamamoto teaches a method of making a rare earth-transition metal-boron permanent magnet including specific examples that are encompassed by claims 1 and 2 (pages 5 and 6, Examples 3-2 and 3-4). It is noted that in Example 3-4 the Zr is present in both the high and low R alloy. As explained above, under the heading Claim Interpretation, applicants' claims encompass such an embodiment. Yamamoto's Examples 3-2 and 3-4 anticipate applicants' claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102/103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

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11. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Yamamoto et al. (Yamamoto, US Patent Application Publication 2002/0007875 A1).

Yamamoto teaches and is applied as set forth above.

Claim 3 and Yamamoto differ in that Yamamoto is silent with respect to the "suitable sintering temperature" and the squareness ratio.

However, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have considered the invention to have been obvious because Yamamoto's examples are encompassed by the instant claims, therefore Yamamoto's alloys would be expected to possess all the same properties as recited in the instant claims, including the "suitable sintering temperature" and the squareness ratio recited in applicants' claim 3, In re Best, 195 USPQ, 430 and MPEP 2112.01.

"Where the claimed and prior art products are identical or substantially identical in structure or composition, or are produced by identical or substantially identical processes, a prima facie case of either anticipation or obviousness has been established, In re Best, 195 USPQ 430, 433 (CCPA 1977). 'When the PTO shows a sound basis for believing that the products of the applicant and the prior art are the same, the applicant has the burden of showing that they are not.' In re Spada, 15 USPQ2d 655, 1658 (Fed. Cir. 1990). Therefore, the prima facie case can be rebutted by evidence showing that the prior art products do not necessarily possess the characteristics of the claimed product. In re Best, 195 USPQ 430, 433 (CCPA 1977)." see MPEP 2112.01.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

12. Claims 4 to 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto et al. (Yamamoto, US Patent Application Publication 2002/0007875 A1).

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Yamamoto teaches and is applied as set forth above. Yamamoto further teaches that the exemplified process is applicable to an alloy composition having a composition that overlaps the composition recited in applicants' claims 4 to 6 (page 3, paragraphs 0042 and 0043). Yamamoto further teaches that reducing the oxygen content of the rare earth-iron-boron alloy enhances the magnetic properties of the rare earth-iron-boron alloy (page 1, paragraphs 0007 and 0008).

Yamamoto and the claims differ in that Yamamoto does not teach the exact same proportions as recited in the instant claims.

However, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have considered the invention to have been obvious because the alloy proportions taught by Yamamoto overlap the instantly claimed proportions and therefore are considered to establish a prima facie case of obviousness. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to select any portion of the disclosed ranges including the instantly claimed ranges from the ranges disclosed in the prior art reference, particularly in view of the fact that;

“The normal desire of scientists or artisans to improve upon what is already generally known provides the motivation to determine where in a disclosed set of percentage ranges is the optimum combination of percentages”, In re Peterson 65 USPQ2d 1379 (CAFC 2003).

Also, In re Geisler 43 USPQ2d 1365 (Fed. Cir. 1997); In re Woodruff, 16 USPQ2d 1934 (CCPA 1976); In re Malagari, 182 USPQ 549, 553 (CCPA 1974) and MPEP 2144.05.

Double Patenting Under 35 USC 101

13. A rejection based on double patenting of the "same invention" type finds its support in the language of 35 U.S.C. 101 which states that "whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process ... may obtain a patent therefor ..." (Emphasis added). Thus, the term "same invention," in this context, means an invention drawn to identical subject matter. See *Miller v. Eagle Mfg. Co.*, 151 U.S. 186 (1894); *In re Ockert*, 245 F.2d 467, 114 USPQ 330 (CCPA 1957); and *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970).

A statutory type (35 U.S.C. 101) double patenting rejection can be overcome by canceling or amending the conflicting claims so they are no longer coextensive in scope. The filing of a terminal disclaimer cannot overcome a double patenting rejection based upon 35 U.S.C. 101.

14. Claim 1 is provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claim 5 of copending Application No. 10/799,243. This is a provisional double patenting rejection since the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

15. Claim 1 is directed to the same invention as that of claim 5 of commonly assigned Application No. 10/799,243. The issue of priority under 35 U.S.C. 102(g) and possibly 35 U.S.C. 102(f) of this single invention must be resolved.

Since the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office normally will not institute an interference between applications or a patent and an application of common ownership (see MPEP Chapter 2300), the assignee is required to state which entity is the prior inventor of the conflicting subject matter. A terminal disclaimer has no effect in this situation since the basis for refusing more than one patent is priority of invention under 35 U.S.C. 102(f) or (g) and not an extension of monopoly.

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Failure to comply with this requirement will result in a holding of abandonment of this application.

Nonstatutory Obviousness Double Patenting

16. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

17. Claims 1 to 6 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 to 6 of copending Application No. 10/799,243. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the subject matter of these two sets of process claims overlap.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claims 1 to 6 are directed to an invention not patentably distinct from claims 1 to 6 of commonly assigned 10/799,243. Specifically, This the obviousness double patenting rejection set forth above.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office normally will not institute an interference between applications or a patent and an application of common ownership (see MPEP Chapter 2300). Commonly assigned 10/799,243, discussed above, would form the basis for a rejection of the noted claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) if the commonly assigned case qualifies as prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) and the conflicting inventions were not commonly owned at the time the invention in this application was made. In order for the examiner to resolve this issue, the assignee can, under 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and 37 CFR 1.78(c), either show that the conflicting inventions were commonly owned at the time the invention in this application was made, or name the prior inventor of the conflicting subject matter.

A showing that the inventions were commonly owned at the time the invention in this application was made will preclude a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based upon the commonly assigned case as a reference under 35 U.S.C. 102(f) or (g), or 35 U.S.C. 102(e) for applications pending on or after December 10, 2004.

Conclusion

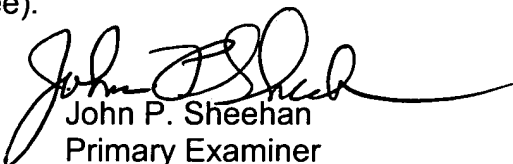
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John P. Sheehan whose telephone number is (571)

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272-1249. The examiner can normally be reached on T-F (6:45-4:30) Second Monday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King can be reached on (571) 272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


John P. Sheehan
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1742

jps